

Selectboard Minutes

January 24, 2023

Present: Andy Artimovich, Chair
Jennifer Jones, Vice-Chair
Robert Mantegari
Jon Morgan
Russ Kelly

At 6pm, Artimovich called the meeting to order.

The Board reviewed payroll and accounts payable then signed the register.

Mantegari motioned, seconded by Jones, to accept the consent agenda which consisted of public minutes from 01/17/2023, non-public sealed meeting minutes from 01/17/2023, recreation manifest, and the following building permits:

- William & JoAnn Beltre, 86 Lyford Lane, Solar
- Jan & Donna Jakubowski, 9 Homestead Lane, Plumbing
- Jaime & Laurie Oesterle, 10 Cross Drive, Minor Project – new roof
- First Baptist Church, 201 North Road, Building
- David & Courtney Klimaszewski, 28 Eleanor's Way, Electrical

Morgan abstained from minutes. All were in favor.

Karen Clement, Town Administrator, presented the board with a voluntary address change form for 180 Route 125 to be reassigned them as 180A and 180B. Clement explained the fire chief and police chief have both reviewed the information are not opposed to the change. Jones asked if the buildings were owned by the same person. Clement responded they are owned by the same person and explained it is one parcel. Mantegari motioned, seconded by Morgan, to sign the document. All were in favor. Artimovich signed the form.

Chief Ventura was present to discuss information on the body camera grant and to request encumbrance of funds. He explained the order would be paid in full and paperwork would be submitted to obtain the promised grant money. Morgan asked if the encumbrance was within the guidelines. Artimovich responded it is because the quote was dated 10/26/2022. Morgan motioned, seconded by Mantegari, to encumber \$50,639.80 for police body cameras. All were in favor.

Artimovich stated Tom Palma can no longer serve as the alternate to CPCNH. Kelly motioned, seconded by Jones, to appoint Bob Radlinski as the alternate to CPCNH. All were in favor.

Andy Gray, Recreation Director, was present to share quotes for the epoxy flooring for the basement of the Brentwood Recreation Center (BRC). He shared two quotes with the board from Minuteman and Northeast Flooring. Gray shared the plan would be to use a flake system. Artimovich asked if the epoxy would have anti-skid features. Mantegari suggested grit be added if it is not already planned. Gray shared he preferred the vinyl planks for the basement for aesthetic reasons. Jones asked if Gray considered going with a lighter color to help brighten up the downstairs. Gray explained a color had not been chosen, but it would coordinate with the colors freshly added to the walls. Jones asked if it was allowable to use impact fees for this project. Clement responded it was an allowable use of impact fees.

Mantegari motioned, seconded by Jones, to expend \$36,000 for the flooring at the BRC with anti-skid epoxy downstairs. All were in favor.

Discussion about the Capital Reserve Fund for Maintenance of Town Buildings occurred. Jones asked how much will be expended. Clement responded she believed \$25,000. Jones stated she would like to decrease the proposed amount from \$50,000 to \$25,000 in the warrant article.

Jones motioned to accept "CRF Maintenance of Town Buildings: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) to be added to the existing Maintenance of Town Buildings Capital Reserve Fund. (Majority vote required)". Morgan seconded the motion. All were in favor.

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The Capital Reserve Fund for Construction of Highway Buildings was discussed next. Artimovich asked how much money remained after the construction of the new highway shed. Kip Kaiser, Building Inspector, explained there is work that still needs completing at the new highway shed including connecting sewer, new water lines, and completion of interior space. He hopes to have that work completed under \$150,000. Jones asked why the balance was so low. Clement responded the two salt sheds were constructed and money was not replenished.

Mantergari motioned to accept “CRF Construction of Highway Buildings: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000) to be added to the existing Construction of Highway Buildings Capital Reserve Fund. (Majority vote required)”. Morgan seconded the motion. All were in favor.

The Capital Reserve Fund for a Police Facility was discussed next. Jones asked how much is currently in CRF. Clement responded \$75,000. Jones asked if that was for the design of it. Chief Ventura responded the design was completed using about \$9,700 from impact fees.

Morgan motioned to accept the “CRF Police Facility: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) to be added to the existing Police Facility Capital Reserve Fund. (Majority vote required)”. Mantegari seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Chief Ventura spoke about his desire for officer safety and explained he has a goal of 2 officers on every shift with 24-hour coverage. He shared there has been a significant decrease in overtime which is reflected in the \$20,000 decrease in the overtime budget line for the 2023 budget. Chief Ventura further explained mandatory training hours are being increased which creates the need to back fill shifts in addition to coverage for elective trainings and vacations. He shared calls are up and arrests have increased about 41%. Artimovich asked what the DOJ police standards are for the population versus police personnel. Ventura responded the FBI numbers are still being utilized which suggests 2 patrol officers per 1000 residents.

Morgan asked Ventura to speak about the morale of the department now. Chief Ventura responded the morale is amazing. He explained there is great teamwork and great investigations happening. Morgan thanked Ventura for his leadership. Artimovich asked if the town was still working on a grant for an officer. Ventura replied he was. The grant being looked into covers one officer for three years with a 5-year commitment. Jones asked about the timing of the grant if Brentwood received it. Ventura explained it would not be received prior to March elections or town meeting.

Morgan motioned to accept “Full Time Police Officer: To see if the Town will vote to establish 1 new full-time police officer position effective April 1, 2023, for an estimated annual wage, benefit, and other related costs of \$101,534 and further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$73,717 for wages, benefits, and other related costs for the period of April 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023. (Majority vote required)”. Mantegari seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Janice Wiers, library director, was present to answer questions and discuss the library amphitheater warrant article. She explained there is a balance of \$50,000 which will be mostly expended to pay the design engineers. Wiers explained she hoped to utilize impact fees, ARPA funds, grant searches, fundraising and donations to get the project completed. Clement explained the use of ARPA funds has changed from the interim ruling to the final ruling which it can serve as a standard revenue replacement limiting funds to general operating budget and that ARPA funds cannot be put into Capital Reserve Funds.

Wiers shared she has an appointment with a resident who does grant writing. She explained there is currently an EPA grant for drainage and the library intends to apply for that grant. Jones asked if the \$200,000 would likely be enough to complete the project or if it would require the project to be done in phases. Wiers explained doing the project in phases could create wasted money as some work done temporarily would then be undone to do the next phase. She expressed her desire is to create safe space that can serve the town.

Jones motioned to accept “CRF Amphitheater: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$200,000) to be added to the existing Library Amphitheater Capital Reserve Fund. (Majority vote required)”. Mantegari seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Chief Bird, fire chief, was present to discuss his two warrant article requests.

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Mantegari motioned to accept “CRF Fire Vehicles: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) to be added to the existing Fire Vehicles Capital Reserve Fund. (Majority vote required)”. Morgan seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Chief Bird presented the board with quotes from Beltronics in Nashua and TwoWay Communications in Newington. Jones asked if the radios have lasted as long as possible. Bird replied they are overdue for replacement and repairs are no longer possible since parts are not available any longer. The Kenwood radio quote from Beltronics was considerably lower according to Chief Bird.

Mantegari motioned to accept “CRF First Responder Radios: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Sixty-Eight Thousand Dollars (\$168,000) for the purchase of 50 portable radios, 4 mobile radios, equipment and installation. (Majority vote required)”. Morgan seconded the motion. All were in favor.

There was discussion on the board regarding ARPA funds. Artimovich shared he was disappointed ARPA cannot be used for capital improvement projects. Clement explained the town received \$472,000 in ARPA funds. In 2022, \$115,210 was earmarked for the fire department new hires and \$14,000 was used toward the project management fee for the highway shed. Clement stated \$100,000 was for the fire department in 2023, \$86,000 for payroll/salaries, and \$35,000 to off-set health insurance increases.

Clement explained the tax impact with the use of ARPA funds is approximately \$.40 or about \$160.00 annually on a \$400,000 assessment. Annually it would be about \$288 without the use of ARPA, which is about \$.72 on a \$400,000 assessment, according to Clement.

Stefanie Lewendon and Josh Bertoulin from the Communications Subcommittee were present to offer recommendations on the website and publications. Lewendon explained the committee has been meeting for about 7 months and their main focus keeps coming back to the website. The board reviewed prepared information comparing the website quotes and what each has to offer. Municipal One was the recommendation of the Communications Subcommittee based on the features including unlimited users, ADA compliance, calendar features, acceptance of online payments, social media integration, analytics, RSS feeds, polls/surveys, scheduling, and mobile friendly.

Artimovich shared his hesitation about the storage size only being 25G. He asked if more space could be purchased. Jones asked what the current budget is. Clement responded it is \$1700 annually which covers hosting and support. Jones asked if impact fees could be used. Clement responded yes. Wiers spoke from the audience regarding the space limitations and explained the library has space for all town reports dating back to the 1800's on a UNH hosted server. Artimovich stated he would like police, fire, library, and Clement to have a demo before a decision was made. He also shared he would be interested in the 5-year locked in rate.

Lewendon and Bertoulin offered three potential options regarding town communication.

Option 1 – expand news/notice feeds

- Expand news/notices page on website
- Offer it in printable form
- Allow departments to post as needed
- Cost is included in monthly fee

Option 2 – Digital bulletin

A

- Work with website vendor to turn on subscribe feature
- Possible subscribers would get notified about every change

B

- Utilize vendor to create an email update for subscribers
- Possible RSS feed
- Additional cost of \$29-\$70/month for 5000 subscribers with mailchimp or MailerLite
- \$50/month with current website vendor

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C

- Create pdf document
- Available as a download from website
- Cost currently unknown

Option 3 – Published Bulletin

- Collect town updates to be published in formatted bulletin
- Printed and delivered to residents by mail
- Estimated \$10,000 - \$15,000 for paper and postage

Lewendon stated the impact on the staff and resources would need to be considered. Jones asked if the communications subcommittee had a sense of the ability of the residents to access electronic mediums. Morgan stated 20% of residents may not want text or email.

Mantegari motioned to expand the News/Notices feed on the website. Morgan seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mantegari motioned to open the general government budget. Morgan seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mantegari motioned to reduce the newsletter line from \$17,575 to \$1 bringing the bottom line of the general government budget to \$39,978. Artimovich seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Jones motioned to relabel line 552 from town newsletter to town communication. Kelly seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Jack Mitchell, Budget Chairperson, asked how the website would be paid for. Mantegari responded impact fees would be used for a new updated website.

Daphne Woss, Town Clerk/Tax Collector, was present to be questioned about the dog licensing process. Morgan stated he received numerous complaints from residents about officers delivering civil forfeitures to residents who have not registered their dog(s) by the state set statute deadline. He questioned Woss about how residents are informed. Woss replied it is on the website, posted on Facebook, printed on the auto renewals that are mailed, residents are reminded when they register their vehicles or pay their taxes. Previously, she explained, notifications were sent out in December tax bills. Woss explained the reminders in the December tax bills did not improve the compliance rate the previous year, therefore the notices did not go out in December 2022.

Woss reminded the board the need to license a dog is a state law, not a Brentwood rule. Additionally, she reminded the board the dates are set by statute and ultimately it is the dog owner's responsibility to license the dog.

Bob Stephens was not present to provide updates on new appointments for Conservation Commission.

Jones shared information on Senate Bill 2 (SB2) towns. She explained it is an alternate way of voting dating back to 1995. Jones stated SB2 towns still elect officials, have town meeting type meetings to have warrant articles presented, discussed, debated and amended. She explained it needs a 3/5 vote to pass. Artimovich asked how many of the SB2 towns want to go back to the traditional town meeting format. Mantegari supports letting voters decide and would approve it to be put on the ballot.

Jones made a motion to forward the decision of becoming an SB2 town to the voters. Kelly seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Kelly offered an update from Energy & Efficiency Committee that they would like to perform an energy audit for town buildings.

Morgan shared the Economic Development meeting was cancelled last night due to the storm and loss of power.

Mantegari had no committee updates.

Jones stated she had no committee updates. She shared the Joint Loss Committee would be meeting soon.

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Jones also reminded residents the filing period for town positions starts January 25th and ends Friday February 3rd at 5pm.

Artimovich stated the Budget Committee would be meeting on the 30th to review warrant articles.

Liz Faria, South Road, stated the deliberative session for the Coop resulted in fewer attendees than Brentwood's Town Meeting. She stated there are 26,000 who could attend the deliberative session, yet it had a smaller turnout than Town meeting. Faria does not support the SB2 decision. Faria questioned the payment to Rockingham Planning Commission and requested an explanation of what is obtained for the \$4000 paid to them. Clement responded it is 2023 membership dues which are based on population. She further explained they help with maps and planning. Faria questioned why 50 radios would be needed when there are "4 full-timers". Artimovich responded there are several call fire fighters.

Becky Dunham, Block Drive, asked for the total of proposed warrant articles. Artimovich responded the amount had not been calculated but offered a quick outline as \$690,000 plus; IT hardware for \$25,000; \$25,00 for revaluation; \$350,000 for road maintenance. Dunham stated she does not believe SB2 deliberative sessions offer a more informed voter. Artimovich encouraged Dunham to come to the public hearing.

Jack Mitchell, budget committee chairperson, asked if the selectboard would be making a recommendation on the SB2 option. Artimovich responded they would not be because it is not money related.

Jim Hajjar, Mohawk Lane, stated he was disappointed ARPA funds would not be used for safety hazards like the library amphitheater.

Letty Bedard, Middle Road, speaking as a private citizen asked how/when ARPA funds are applied. Clement responded it is reported as gross revenue offsetting the budget. Bedard asked if they have to be earmarked in the budget. Clement responded yes they must be earmarked against certain line items.

Janice Wiers, library director, shared the library was able to assist residents experiencing power outages with services such as study areas, conference call space, and charging medical equipment.

Mantegari motioned, seconded by Morgan, to adjourn the meeting at 8:37pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tamera Peek